Appendix I.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 202 asked by Sri K. Sattanatha Karayalar at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 11th February 1959, page 77 supra.]

Steps taken by the Agriculture Department to supply good quality " Seed Potatoes " to potato growers in this State.

The Agriculture Department is taking every effort to supply good qualities of potato seeds in this State especially in the district of the Nilgiris which is the only district where the major crop is potato. After making research in the Agricultural Research Station, Nanjanad, on the potato seeds, it has been found that the existing potato stocks are all disease-affected. It has also been found that fresh imported seeds of " Great Scot " and " President" varieties are capable of giving increased yields of more than 50 per cent over the old generation seeds of these varieties produced locally. The department therefore introduced these two varieties after testing them in the Agricultural Research Station, Nanjanad and released to the ryots for further multiplication. But it is observed that over a period of years these imported varieties deteriorate due to virus diseases which results in low yields. From the experimental data available at the Agricultural Research Station, Nanjanad, it is found that the deterioration of the fresh imported seeds can be controlled to a certain extent up to five years by making the ryots rogue the crop. So supply of fresh waves of seeds from imported material once in five years is quite necessary.

2. As the State Seed Farms play a very important role in the multiplication and distribution of seeds the department have earmarked certain State Seed Farms in the Nilgiris district for the sole purpose of multiplication of good quality potato seeds. There are already six State Seed Farms in this district and eight more farms are proposed to be opened in the current year. With the aid of these State Seed Farms, it may be possible to cover about 200 acres of village seed farm from where it is possible to distribute seeds to ryots to cover the whole area. The Government are therefore making arrangements for the import of 120 tons of seed potato from the United Kingdom. If these are imported, it is expected that the first year's cropping would produce 300 tons which will be further multiplied. A scheme for the development of potatoes in the Nilgiris district has also been formulated by the Director of Agriculture, Madras, and the same is under consideration of the Government.